

Message Text

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SUBJ: ARAB AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE
VISITS UAE

REF: STATE 66949

1. ARAB-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE (AAEC) DELEGATION LED BY NORTH CAROLINA LT. GOVERNOR JIMMY GREEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED MARCH 27-29 VISIT TO THE UAE. GROUP AS GUESTS OF FOREIGN MINISTRY PAID COURTESY CALLS ON RULERS OF DUBAY, SHARJAH, AND FOREIGN MINISTER AHMAD SUWAIDI AND UAE UNIVERSITY IN AL AIN. MINISTER OF PLANNING SAID GHUBBASH HOSTED DINNER EVENING MARCH 27 WHILE AMBASSADOR HOSTED RECEPTION EVENING MARCH 28 TO INTRODUCE GROUP TO SPECTRUM OF UAENICONOMIC AND CULTURAL PERSONALITIES. GROUP BRIEFED BY AMBASSADOR AND APPOINTMENTS ARRANGED WITH LOCAL BUSINESSMEN BY THE EMBASSY.

2. IN ADDITION TO USUAL COURTESIES EXCHANGED, GROUP RAISED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SUWAIDI ISSUE OF EASIER VISA ISSUANCE TO AMERICAN CITIZENS FOR VISITS TO ARAB STATES. THEY SUGGESTED THAT VISA
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GRANTING AUTHORITY BE GIVEN TO ARAB-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND/OR HONORARY CONSULS IN U.S. FOREIGN MINISTER RESPONDED THAT PROBLEM WAS UNDER STUDY AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD CONSIDER NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS. HE URGED THAT THEY DISCUSS THEIR VIEWS WITH UAE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON.

3. PURPOSE OF TRIP AS EXPLAINED TO UAE INTERLOCUTORS WAS TO

EXPLAIN AACEC TO ARABS AS VEHICLE TO PERMIT GREATER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OUTSIDE TRADITIONAL WASHINGTON/BOSTON AXIS. GROUP RECEIVED SYMPATHETIC HEARING IN UAE AS FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER ANY PROPOSALS THAT AACEC CARED TO MAKE ABOUT POSSIBLE "WAYS AND MEANS" TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. ONE NON-GOVERNMENTAL IDEA WHICH MAY GET OFF GROUND IS PROPOSAL TO HOLD NEXT ARAB INSURANCE SEMINAR IN U.S. IN CONCERT WITH MEETING OF U.S. INSURANCE INDUSTRY (ARAB INSURANCE SEMINAR IS INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF ARAB INSURANCE COMPANY EXECUTIVES THIS YEAR HELD IN LONDON). CONTACTS ON THIS PROPOSAL HAVE BEGUN BETWEEN WALTER H. EVANS, WASHINGTON LAWYER MEMBER OF GROUP, AND WASEF JABSHEH, GENERAL MANAGER OF ABU DHABI NATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY.

4. BUSINESSMEN GROUP MANAGED TO MAKE USEFUL CONTACTS. MOST SUCCESSFUL HAS BEEN EUGENE SHORT OF IRWAN INDUSTRIES WHO ESTIMATES THAT SALES IN UAE MARKET IN NEXT 12 MONTHS OF AIR CONDITIONED FABRIC STRUCTURES MANUFACTURED BY IRWAN WILL AMOUNT TO \$2 MILLION.

5. COMMENT: WHILE GROUP'S ADVANCE COORDINATION WAS HELTER-SKELTER, NONETHELESS SERIOUS INTERESTS OF SEVERAL ATRICULATE MEMBERS OF GROUP IN BROADENING GRASSROOTS AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING OF ARAB-AMERICAN RELATIONS ENSURED THAT VISIT HERE WAS SUCCESSFUL. ASSUMING GROUP ULTIMATELY GETS ITS ACT TOGETHER ON AMERICAN SIDE, IT IS LIKELY TO FIND UAE GOVERNMENT QUITE RECEIPTIVE TO ITS ACTIVITIES.

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